

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mr. Crouter, April 1, 1892, with transcript

Copy. Parker House, Boston, April 1st 1892. Dear Mr. C ?? hes u ter,—

Many thanks for your note of the 81st ulto. just received. I endorse every word you say about Nat.Deaf Mute College, and think you should go ahead at once and formulate definite plans for an oral School of Technology. Let us discuss the details and have a plan elaborated by the time of the Summer Meeting of the Association, when we can either bring it publicly before the Association, or bring it privately before the heads of the Oral School who may be present at the meeting. Inthe—meantime the public agitation for an Oral Department at the Natl.College should be continued. There is no harm in letting President Gallandet have this idea that a fight imminent in Congress, as the dread of a conflict that may injure the College and lead to a still further curtailment of his appropriations, may operate as an element in inducing him to do better justice to oral work. I quite agree with you however, that we better abandon any idea of a direct appeal to Congress, and let well alone there.

The wording of the Articulation proviso inserted in the present Bill, would allow the College to establish an Oral Department if so desired. Our efforts should be directed to inducing it to do it.

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I think therefore, we should prepare an appeal to the President and Directors and get it ready for presentation as soon as possible after President Gallandet's reply to your letter has been published. Let it be prepared, signed, presented to the College, and last but not least, published . I will take care that the publication is brought to the attention of members of Congress.

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I hardly think that we can induce the College to establish an Oral Department next year, but I feel quite certain that we can make it advance another step in that direction by introducing Oral recitations for speaking students. I am sure that all the Directors will endorse that, and it is perfectly practicable without one cent of additional expense.

I would commence by drawing attention to the fact, that a considerable proportion of the Students are able to speak, and that it is only right and proper that they should be encouraged to use their vocal organs on every possible occasion. To this end we urge:—

1st. That speaking students should be required to recite Orally and should be placed exclusively under hearing professors, and

2nd. That students who are graduates of oral schools should be taught by the Oral method.

I should expect the College to accept the first proposition and reject the second. We can then go ahead independently upon your 3 Techorological idea.

Our programme I think should be 1st, public Agitation concerning the relation of the Natl.College to the Oral Schools of the Country-public agitation now —while amendments to the appropriation Bill are still in order, so that the dread of a possible conflict in Congress may have full weight: and

2nd. Private discussion to elaborate a practicable scheme to establish a separate school for the higher education of the Deaf by the Oral method. The plan not to be made public till after the Summer Meeting of the A.A.P.T.U.

I have written thus fully, because I can give no further thought to the subject for two or three weeks at least. I go upon the witness stand on Monday morning and must now devote all my time to telephone matters. I have given you my views above, quite hurriedly, not as fully digested thoughts, but simply as suggestions, in the hope that they may

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be of assistance to you and Mr. Greenberger in preparing some petition to the College authorities. I can do no more now, and must say good bye to the whole subject for a while. I can always make good use of about 50 copies of the Silent World, containing any discussion of this subject. I can send them to Senetors and Representatives with whom I am personally acquainted, with certainty that some of them at least will read the articles and follow the discussion intelligently.

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I think it would be a good plan to have Dr. Harrison Allen and Dr. Hewson as you suggest. I will not communicate with Dr. Clarence J. Blake regarding lectures upon the Ear, until I know whether or not, you have decided to ask Dr. Hewson to take up that subject.

I will try to hurry up Mr. Wester ? v elt. Proceedings should come out as soon as possible.

I have not applied for space at the World's Fair, as I am somewhat puzzled as to how to word my application. Can you help me, as I have no time to give much thought to the subject.

Yours very sincerely, (sig) Alexander Graham Bell. Prof.A.L.E. Crouter, Institution for the Deaf, Broad & Pine, Philadelphia, Pa.